

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-14 ISO-00 IO-14 OMB-01 SAM-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SR-02 ORM-03

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2532

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USUN NEW YORK 583

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 3259

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, AG, EG, SA, SP, MR, FR, LY, TS, SS, MO

SUBJECT: SPANISH SAHARA

REF: RABAT 3144 (NOTAL)

1. FON MIN LARAKI AND I HAD TOUR D'HORIZON JULY 11 ON NUMBER OF SUBJECTS. SESSION HAD BEEN ARRANGED PRIOR TO HIS TRIP TO CAIRO JULY 2. LARAKI EXPANDED ON OFFICIAL MOROCCAN VIEWS ON SPANISH SAHARA (REFTEL) IN FOLLOWING RESPECTS:

A. ALGERIA HAD CLAIMED RIGHT TO "INTERESTED PARTY" STATUS WITH REGARD TO DECOLONIZATION, LARAKI NOTED. ALGERIA COULD NOT BE INTERESTED PARTY AS TO TERRITORIAL CLAIM, HOWEVER, BECAUSE GOA HAD NEVER PUT FORWARD ANY SUCH CLAIM.

B. INDEPENDENT SAHARA, AS KING HAD STATED, WOULD BE NO MORE THAN
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PUPPET STATE. AS SUCH, LARAKI SAID, IT COULD WELL BECOME

TOOL, FOR INSTANCE, OF CHINESE OR LIBYANS. (WHAT HE PROBABLY MEANT WAS ALGERIA.)

C. ARAB SUPPORTERS FOR MOROCCAN POSITION ON SAHARA, LARAKI SAID, INCLUDED SYRIA, EGYPT, AND SAUDI ARABIA. REPLYING TO MY QUERY, HE CLAIMED THIS SUPPORT WAS SPECIFICALLY FOR MOROCCAN CALL FOR RETURN OF SAHARA TO MOROCCO OR REFERENDUM WITH REFUGEES VOTING. LARAKI ADDED THAT TUNISIAN SUPPORT ASSURED PREVIOUSLY. HIS ASSESSMENT OF ARAB SUPPORT WAS BASED ON PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS, NOT PUBLIC STATEMENTS, HE NOTED.

D. WHEN I REFERRED TO ALGERIAN INFLUENCE IN ARAB WORLD, LARAKI SAID THAN BOUMEDIENE AT MOGADISCIO CONFERENCE HAD LISTENED TO MOROCCAN PRESENTATION ON SAHARA WITHOUT OFFERING CONTRADICTIONS OR COMMENTS. LARAKI DID NOT SEE THIS ALGERIAN ABSTENTION AS SYNONYMOUS WITH SUPPORT, BUT FELT ALGERIA, NOT HAVING RAISED TERRITORIAL CLAIM, WAS NOT IN POSITION TO PUSH ANY SUCH CLAIM ITSELF NOW AND WOULD PROBABLY THEREFORE BE ACQUIESCENT VIS-A-VIS MOROCCAN POSITION.

2. LARAKI ALSO STRESSED SUCH FAMILIAR THEMES AS MOROCCO'S PATIENCE AND WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE WITH SPAIN, SPAIN'S FOOT-DRAGGING, AND MOROCCO'S DISINTERESTEDNESS CONCERNING SAHARAN PHOSPHATES. HE MENTIONED THAT UN DEP SECRETARY GENERAL MIN CHAO TANG, ON VISIT HERE, HAD AGREED WITH HIM THAT SPAIN HAD NOT BEEN RESPONSIVE TO UN ON SAHARAN ISSUE. MOROCCO WAS READY TO "DO ANYTHING", HE CONCLUDED, AND SPAIN HAD DELAYED LONG ENOUGH. IN RESPONSE, I REITERATED OUT STRONG HOPE FOR BILATERAL MOROCCAN-SPANISH TALKS AND PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF SAHARAN ISSUE.

3. COMMENT: LARAKI, OF COURSE, PUTS BEST POSSIBLE FACE ON MOROCCAN CASE. HIS EXPECTATIONS FOR ARAB SUPPORT OF MOROCCAN POSITION MY BE OPTIMISTIC. EGYPTIAN AND SAUDI AMBASSADORS, CONFIDENTIAL

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WHOM I SAW EARLIER THIS WEEK, HAVE NOT SHOWN ENTHUSIASM FOR MOROCCAN POSITION ON SAHARA. FURTHER, TUNISIAN PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON SAHARA HAVE SO FAR BEEN LIMITED ONLY TO SUPPORTING MOROCCO'S EFFORTS TO LIBERATE RPT LIBERATE TERRITORIES FROM SPANISH CONTROL. NO SUPPORT HAD BEEN GIVEN FOR MOROCCO'S DESIRE TO RECOVER SAHARA. ON OTHER HAND, EGYPTIAN DESIRE FOR SHOW OF ARAB UNITY

AT UPCOMING RABAT SUMMIT MAY WORK IN MOROCCO'S FAVOR.

4. SIMILIARY, FEARS LARAKI EXPRESSED OF CHINESE OR LIBYAN EXPLOITATION OF AN INDEPENDENT SAHARA ARE NO DOUBT SELF-SERVING. AT SAME TIME, STRONG FEELINGS ECHOED IN LARAKI'S REMARKS AT MOROCCO READY TO "DO ANYTHING" SHOULD BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. VIEW IS WIDELY HELD THAT NEXT MOROCCAN MOVE WILL BE TO SEND SAHARAN GUERRILLAS ACROSS BORDER TO PROVOKE CLASHES WITH SPANISH FORCES, AND THERE IS NOW A THEORY (WHICH WE DISCOUNT) THAT ELEMENTS OF FAR CONTINGENT RECENTLY RETURNED FROM SYRIA WILL BE USED FOR THIS PURPOSE. EXISTENCE THIS SORT OF RUMOR IS INDICATION THAT MOROCCANS GENUINELY AROUSED.

5. FINALLY, WE CAN ALSO EXPECT REQUEST FOR U.S. GOOD OFFICES WITH SPAIN TO CONTINUE. OFFICERS AT ALL LEVELS OF MISSION ARE BEING QUERIED BY MOROCCAN OPPOSITE NUMBERS AS TO U.S. POSITION, AND THIS WILL REMAIN PERSISTENT THEME.

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